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Review.

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Thomas F. Torrance

THOUGHTS

ON

EDUCATION,

Tending chiefly

To recommend to the Attention of the Public, ſome Particulars relating to that Subject; which are not generally conſidered with the Regard their Importance deſerves.

By the Author of BRITAIN'S REMEMBRANCER.

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THOUGHTS

ON

EDUCATION, &c.

AGAIN a second time, my dear Countrymen, a sincere well-wisher to you and all your interests presumes, on your experienced patience and good-nature, to address you. The hour of terror and distress was hardly over, and the cloud, which had for some time hung black and gloomy over this Nation, threatning to burst upon it in a tempest of general destruction, was but just beginning to break, when a former weak but well-meant Representation was laid before you*. In a storm at sea it is common not only for professed mariners and pilots to exert themselves for the safety of the ship, but likewise, in case of need, every private passenger thinks himself obliged to lend what assistance he can for the benefit of the whole. In the same manner, in a time of national danger, whoever has the deliverance of his country sincerely and earnestly at heart, will not so much

* The first edition of *Britain's Remembrancer*, the Piece here understood, was published in the month of *January*, 1745-6, when the Rebel-army was flying before the Duke of *Cumberland*, by whom they were totally defeated at the battle of *Culloden* the 16th day of *April* following. The chief design of the Piece was to point out the national vices and follies we were called upon by that visitation to reform.

conſider his own Qualifications for doing any thing to avert or mitigate the judgments of Heaven, as the Need there is that ſomething be done; and will accordingly contribute his mite, and exert his abilities, ſuch as they are. To ſlip an opportunity of acknowledging the candid reception given by you to what was offered on that occaſion, would be both uncivil and unjuſt: though at the ſame time, To gain the *Attention* or even the moſt univerſal *Approbation* of Readers, will by no means give full ſatisfaction to a writer, whoſe aim is at ſomething different from both, and who had rather ſee one perſon *follow* his advice than a thouſand approve and yet *neglect* it. However, they, who give a friendly monitor a fair *hearing*, are more likely in time to think of taking his counſel than they who will not ſo much as *hear* him. That the face of affairs in this nation is altered very much for the better ſince the above-mentioned period, is certain. That in place of the immediate proſpect of a general confuſion, likely to end in the ſubverſion of our civil and religious liberties, or in a laſting and bloody civil war, we now ſee Rebellion mortally wounded, and breathing its laſt; the ſword of juſtice drunk with its blood, and her ſelf tired and ſatiated with vengeance; the liberties of our country and the proteſtant religion the more firmly eſtabliſhed for their having been ſhaken by the late commotions. And have we then no more to think of or to fear, or do we imagine Heaven has but *one* Judgment to puniſh national Wickedneſs or Indolence? Surely, if ever it be the duty or intereſt of a nation to endeavour, by a ſuitable conduct, to gain or keep the favour and protection of Omnipotence, it is more peculiarly ſo of a people favoured by ſo many and ſo ſignal interpoſitions as we have been. But alas! the happy effect, which might have been expected from our deliverance, to wit, the correct-

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ing of our follies and vices, has not yet appeared clearly enough, to shew that the late visitation has done its work, so as to render a more severe and effectual one unnecessary.

But, to proceed to the Subject of the following pages: In the former Essay, among other particulars, one is mentioned, as well worthy the attention of the nation, and likely to contribute greatly to its advantage, both by its *natural* consequences, and by the probability of its drawing down a *Blessing* upon us, to wit, *The virtuous and religious Education of the Youth.* The subject could not be there fully treated on, and therefore your serious attention is desired to the following additional thoughts on a matter, which is not only in it self of the utmost importance, but which likewise seems in a peculiar manner to want a hearty recommendation to the regard of the *present* Age.

In the first place it seems hardly necessary that any Parent or Instructor of youth, who believes the Christian religion, be told, That a strict account will certainly be required, at the hands of all persons, of whatever the divine providence has committed to them; and that, as no *Trust*, that can be committed to any person, is of equal importance with that of *immortal souls*, it is to be supposed, no neglect whatever will be so severely punished in another world as the neglect of the souls committed to the care of Parents and Instructors of youth, especially considering, That the souls of Youth are more immediately committed to the care of their Parents and Instructors than even those of a People are to their Pastor; as persons arrived at years of discretion may be supposed (if they have had a proper education) in a great measure capable of conducting themselves; whereas the utter *incapacity* of Youth lays them almost wholly at the mercy of their Parents or Instructors for a set of habits to regu-

late their whole conduct through life, upon which their happiness through eternity depends. And can those Parents or Instructors of youth, the number of which, it is to be feared, is not small, be said to discharge faithfully and thoroughly this awful trust, who are so far from endeavouring to form the minds of the youth under their care, and to establish them on solid and rational principles of Virtue and Religion, that many of them do not seem to think any such thing necessary to be attempted, and that a youth educated either to an *employment* by which he may gain a subsistence, or accomplish'd in the polite *arts* and *sciences* (if his birth be suitable) has had full justice done him by those to whom the charge of him was committed by providence. One would think no parent or instructor of youth, who believes that a day of accounts will come at last, should be able to think without trembling, of the terrors of it, lest the Judge should then say to such as have been negligent of the souls committed to their care, "Thou wicked and slothful servant,* "oughtest thou not to have improved to the ut-"most the opportunity put in thy hands, of being "useful to thy fellow-creatures, especially to those "immediately entrusted to thy care? How hast thou "shamefully *neglected* what thou might'st have "faithfully and worthily *performed?* How hast "thou, instead of being of the greatest service in "thy station and a blessing to numbers, proved "unworthy of thy place in society, and the cause "why numbers have come short of happiness. "Instead, therefore, of the *reward*, that might "have crowned thy labours, receive the *doom* due "to thy wickedness and negligence." Nor will it be agreeable to any parent or instructor of youth in that day, to hear any unhappy person, formerly under his care, reproach him in the following man-

* *Matth.* xxv. 26.

ner. "Had you faithfully and ſtrictly diſcharged "your duty to me, I had not probably been miſe- "rable this day. Had you warned me of the dan- "gers of vice and irregularity, I might have "eſcaped them. Had you laid before me the re- "wards of virtue and religion, I might perhaps "have aſpired at them. Why did you, in my "days of youthful weakneſs and inexperience, keep "me in the dark, and ſuffer me to miſtake my "way to happineſs for want of a guide? How "could you be ſo cruel to one incapable of injuring "you? How could you neglect a work ſo agree- "able? How could you trifle with what was of ſo "much conſequence to one you pretended to love? "Had you no ambition to lay the foundation of a "ſtructure, which might have riſen higher and "higher through eternity? Had you no zeal to be "found faithful in the truſt committed to you? "Henceforth nothing remains but the cruel reflec- "tion on the loſs of all the inexpreſſible joy we "might have given to one another, had you ſeen "me arrive at that happineſs you had endeavoured "with ſucceſs to lead me to, and had I had reaſon "to thank you for your care in pointing me the "way; inſtead of which ———" But this is a ſubject too ſhocking to enlarge any farther upon. Let it ſuffice to add, at preſent, That as, on the one hand, the forming of a rational mind to virtue, religion, and happineſs is the moſt glorious work an angel, an arch-angel, or any created Being can be employed in, ſo, in all probability, it will meet with the higheſt reward *; on the other, as the ne-

* "They that *bring* many to righteouſneſs ſhall ſhine as the "ſtars for ever and ever" *Dan.* xii. 3. "Whoſoever ſhall "break one of theſe leaſt commandments, and ſhall *teach* men "ſo, ſhall be called the leaſt in the kingdom of heaven," (that is, ſhall have no part in the Chriſtian Salvation) "but whoſo- "ever ſhall do and *teach* them, the ſame ſhall be called *great* "in the kingdom of heaven."

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glect of an immortal ſoul is a breach of the moſt important truſt that can be committed to any perſon, it is likely to meet with the ſevereſt puniſhment.

Man being a creature deſigned not only for a ſhort and uncertain duration in the preſent ſtate, but alſo for an everlaſting one after this is at an end, from the hour of his entrance into the world, an exiſtence commences, which is to go on through eternity, and therefore from that time a conſtant regard ought to be had, firſt by thoſe to whom the care of him during his minority is committed, and afterwards by himſelf, to each ſeveral *Period* of his exiſtence, and likewiſe to the unmeaſurable and endleſs *Whole*. If the opinion of the moſt judicious be true, *viz.* That the very milk an infant ſucks may have ſuch an influence upon his paſſions and appetites as may affect his whole conduct through life, upon which every one knows how much his happineſs through eternity depends; I ſay, if this opinion be juſt, it is plain, That nothing is indifferent or of ſmall conſequence in the education of youth, even from the earlieſt infancy: but that, on the contrary, things, which at firſt view may ſeem trivial, may be followed by conſequences of a nature very far from trivial. I mention this particular only by the By, it being my deſign to inſiſt chiefly on the care of youth between the age of ſix and eighteen, before which laſt period if the mind of a perſon be not formed to virtue and religion, it is not to be expected it ever ſhould afterwards.

Previous to every other ſtep, that is to be taken in the education of a young perſon, is the forming and breaking his temper; by cheriſhing and encouraging the good qualities of it, as Emulation, or a laudable deſire of excelling, Curioſity, or thirſt after knowledge, Humility, Tractableneſs, Meekneſs, Fearfulneſs of offending, and the reſt; and by cruſhing

ing and nipping in the bud the luxuriant or pernicious ones, as Anger, Pride, Reſentment, Obſtinacy, Sloth, Falſhood, and ſo forth. If this work be neglected by parents till the age of Six be paſt, it need hardly be attempted at all: for the mind ſoon acquires a ſturdineſs and obſtinacy that is not to be conquered, and bad *Habits* become quickly, as it were, a part of the very ſoul, and as hard to be eradicated as it would be to ſeparate the faculties of the ſoul from one another. A particular that muſt make every wiſe and conſiderate perſon tremble at the thought of the conſequences of ſuffering any other than good and virtuous *Habits* to take poſſeſſion of his mind, and ſhould make every Parent or Guardian of youth to the laſt degree ſolicitous what *Habits* firſt take root in the minds of thoſe he has the charge of.

The whole of education ſeems to me to conſiſt of two parts, or to come under two general heads; the firſt is, The accompliſhing a perſon in ſuch parts of knowledge as may be uſeful for qualifying him to paſs decently and comfortably through the *preſent life*; the ſecond is, The right directing him how to prepare himſelf for the *everlaſting duration* after this life is at an end, teaching him how to improve and ennoble his nature, and putting him in the way of attaining the *favour of his Maker*, which is only another phraſe for *perfect happineſs*. And by how much an everlaſting duration exceeds the fleeting dream of the preſent life, and by how much it is more fatal to be unprepared to enter upon eternity than upon the ſtage of this world, by ſo much undoubtedly it is of more conſequence that Parents and Inſtructors of youth have a regard to the *Morals* and *Principles* of thoſe committed to their charge, than that their whole care be confined to their accompliſhments and attainments in *ſcholarſhip*, and by ſo much the more fatal a miſcarriage in the former

mer than in the latter. I would not here be thought to insinuate, That human literature is of small consequence in education; on the contrary, I do not know one branch of knowledge, which any man (of a middling station, at least, and who is endued with a tolerable measure of natural sense,) had better be wholly ignorant of: for I am convinced, That giving the mind an early turn to *Knowledge* of any innocent kind is doing it a very eminent service: because, being an active and restless principle, it will, in its search after happiness, run out in pursuit after either the objects of *Sense*, to wit, Pleasure, Power, or Riches; or after those of the *Mind*, to wit, Knowledge, Virtue, or Religion: and every one knows, how much it were to be desired, that mankind would cultivate their *rational* rather than their *sensual* faculties, and place their happiness in the acquisition of the objects of the former than the latter.

Were I to put together a sketch of what I think every youth ought to be instructed in, before the time of life that is proper for going to business or an university, it would be much in the following manner.

First, the knowledge of *Grammar* seems to be a thing of that universal usefulness for leading people into a method of speaking or writing their thoughts correctly and intelligibly, and of rightly apprehending those of others, that I think no man (however low his station may be) ought to be without it, and that children, whose parents either do not choose, or cannot afford them a classical education, ought to be taught Grammar in their mother tongue, the science being the same through all languages. Along with Grammar, *Orthography* and *Pointing* ought to be taught; as nothing more betrays a mean and sordid education than false spelling, nor is there any thing more apt to occasion misapprehensions of a person's meaning, which, in

business,

buſineſs, ſometimes prove fatal, than the want of proper points and ſtops in his letters or other writings, and the running of one ſentence into another.

The knowledge of *Latin* and *Greek* (eſpecially the firſt) ſeems rather valuable on account of their being the foundation of moſt modern languages, than for their own ſake. If it be true, which is commonly aſſerted, that there is ſcarce a radical word in any of the modern tongues of above two ſyllables long, that is not derived from one or other of them, it can hardly be ſuppoſed a perſon, who is a perfect ſtranger to theſe languages, can thoroughly enter into the ſenſe and ſpirit of his own mother-tongue. In inſtructing youth in the *Latin* language, I ſhould think it adviſable to make them familiar with the *Hiſtorians*, rather than the *Poets*, as the writings of the firſt are truly uſeful and inſtructing, whereas thoſe of the laſt generally tend to hurt the morals of youth, or at leaſt to fill their brains with falſe and romantic ideas, and to leſſen their value for truth. There are innumerable paſſages in *Ovid*, *Horace*, and ſome others of the Heathen poets commonly in the hands of young people, that ought not to be in print, or any way expoſed to public view in a Chriſtian country. And indeed the peruſal of the beſt of them is only travelling through fairy-land, and treading on inchanted ground. It is at leaſt abſolutely neceſſary, that youth be guarded from the bad effects of too great an admiration for heathen poetry, by giving them early a juſt contempt for its childiſh fables, and by ſhewing them the advantages of our rational and ſublime religion when ſet in contraſt with the abſurd and wretched mythology of the antients, which has nothing in it really valuable, except that a little knowledge of it ſerves to illuſtrate ſome obſcure parts of hiſtory, as it has greatly clouded and

darkened many more. The knowledge of the *Greek* language is worth the pains of any young perſon, who has leiſure to attain it; for the ſake of reading the Septuagint tranſlation of the Bible, the New Teſtament, and the writings of the earlieſt Fathers of the Chriſtian church, in the original.

The *French language* is ſo eaſily acquired, that, though not one perſon in an hundred ever has any great occaſion for it in life, I think it is worth while for youth to employ ſome of their leiſure hours in reading it.

The art of *Writing*, being a mechanical thing, may be acquired by a youth of any ſort of genius, bright or dull, through dint of practice and application.

Drawing is an art both elegant and uſeful; but ought by no means to be forced upon every youth: for none but ſuch as are born with a genius for it, will ſucceed at it.

Muſic, as it is not to be acquired without a natural taſte, ſo it ought to be very ſparingly indulged, where there is a genius for it. It is a bewitching art, and one way or other is hurtful to moſt people, who delight in and practiſe it. If *Dancing* is to be learned at all, it ought to be diſpatched in early youth, for various reaſons.

The knowledge of *Numbers* is wanted by almoſt every perſon, every day of his life: nor can the time beſtowed in ſtudying the elements of *Mathematics* be grudged by any one who knows their univerſal uſefulneſs.

The art of *Keeping accounts* diſtinct and regular, after the *Italian* method, is ſo beautiful, and at the ſame time uſeful, leſs or more, to people almoſt in all ſtations in life, that I think no man ought to be without it, and the rather becauſe it is in itſelf ſo ſimple and eaſily acquired.

Geography is a ſcience not leſs uſeful than ſimple; for a perſon can hardly enter into any converſation,

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read any piece of hiſtory, or rightly underſtand an article in a News-paper, without ſome knowledge of the ſituations of places: nor does it require any acuteneſs of genius or intenſe application, being almoſt wholly a work of Memory.

I do not think it difficult to give moſt young people, who have reached the age of twelve, tho' they be not intended for an academical education, a tolerable notion of theoretical *Aſtronomy*, ſo as to enable them to form ſome idea of the vaſtneſs of the ſyſtem of the univerſe, and the general laws, by which its motions and revolutions are carried on. I think the ſame may be ſaid of the ſcience of *Anatomy*, or the knowledge of the ſtructure of animal bodies, eſpecially the human. By communicating a little of theſe two laſt mentioned parts of knowledge to youth, they cannot miſs being led to entertain high and elevated notions of the Maker and Governor of the world, and muſt thereby be engaged to fear and obey him from rational and worthy motives. There is indeed no part of the works of nature, the contemplation of which will not delight and improve a young and innocent mind, and alſo enlarge and raiſe it above every thing that is mean or unworthy of its attention; and the advantage of giving young people an early turn to *Knowledge* is not to be imagined, as it pre-engages them, before the dangerous and miſchievous objects of *Senſe* get hold of them, and ſerves for food to the mind, which otherwiſe muſt run after gratifications of a far inferior and more unworthy kind. A ſet of *microſcopical obſervations*, a few experiments in *natural philoſophy*, ſuch as thoſe of the air-pump, *&c.* and a few of thoſe *books* which are written on purpoſe for introducing youth to a little knowledge of that kind, are all extremely proper for employing their leiſure hours from twelve years of age and upwards.

But there is no kind of reading that tends more to ſettle the judgment, than that of *Hiſtory* and *Biography*, or the lives of eminent perſons; which leads to the moſt uſeful of all ſorts of knowledge, I mean that of *human nature*, and to prudence in the conduct of life; without which all other kinds of learning are rather an incumbrance than any advantage in a man's affairs.

Young people ought alſo from their earlieſt years to be eſtabliſhed in a rational ſet of *political principles*, and taught the love of *liberty* and their *country*, and conſequently the hatred of Popery, Tyranny, Perſecution, Venality, and whatever elſe is againſt the intereſt of a free people. They ought at the ſame time to be taught the proper medium betwixt an abject and ſlaviſh diſpoſition in a people on the one ſide, and abſolute licentiouſneſs, and a ſpirit of murmuring and complaining without reaſon againſt their governors, on the other; and that the true ſpirit of liberty is always corrected and reſtrained by a proper *ſubmiſſion* to government. They ought as ſoon as poſſible to be prepoſſeſſed againſt Party-diſputes and contentions, and taught to judge of them from *Hiſtory*, and ſhould be informed, that whatever the furious zealots on each ſide have pretended, experience has ſhewn, That *Self* has been generally at the bottom with both; that party is very juſtly ſaid to be the madneſs of many for the gain of a few; and that a Patriot is only a Courtier out of place, and a Courtier a Patriot in place: That wherever a ſet of men are found to ſtick obſtinately together, to go through thick and thin, and to approve and diſapprove conſtantly the ſame meaſures and proceedings, it is almoſt an infallible mark of party; becauſe it is hardly conceivable, that a great number of men ſhould exactly agree in their ſentiments upon a great number of different points, without any variation, unleſs they contrive to agree together for the

the ſake of carrying on ſome particular ſcheme, diſtinct from the intereſt of their country. They ought early to be accuſtomed to conſider themſelves as every day drawing nearer and nearer to a ſtate of maturity, when they muſt (if an untimely death prevent not) think of acting a part on the ſtage of life, and becoming *members of ſociety*. They cannot therefore be too early forewarned of the ſtrange viciſſitudes of human life, they may afterwards have occaſion to paſs through; nor too ſtrongly guarded againſt the various arts of flatterers or other crafty and deſigning men, nor too well inſtructed how to detect them. They ſhould be taught a ſeries of rules for their prudent conduct in life, and how to diſtinguiſh the faulty from the laudable, to which it bears the neareſt reſemblance; the prudent from the ſuſpicious and over-cautious, the generous from the laviſh, the frugal from the niggardly, the diligent from the covetous, and ſo forth. There ſhould be a variety of *Caſes* propoſed to them, taken from what uſually happens in mens commerce and intercourſe with one another; and they ſhould be taught to judge and diſtinguiſh nicely what is proper and what improper to be done in each of them, and the reaſons.

Young people ought to be ſtrongly and early prepoſſeſſed againſt the three fatal *Baits*, which allure the bulk of mankind, and draw them into infinite miſery and misfortune in the preſent life, and often into utter deſtruction at laſt, I mean, *Ambition*, *Covetouſneſs*, and *Love of Pleaſure*. They ought to be taught, That the ſatisfaction (if it may be ſo called) which *Ambition* offers, is altogether *imaginary*, conſiſting wholly in the applauſe of *others*, which will never give any happineſs to a wiſe man, as it is of no value unleſs where it ſerves to *confirm* the judgment of his own *Conſcience*. That no wiſe or good man will ever do any action for the ſake

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of applauſe, which his own conſcience will not warrant, nor will he abſtain from or diſapprove of any which his own conſcience atteſts to be good and virtuous, and proper to be done in his circumſtances, merely becauſe he knows the ſuperficial multitude will find fault with it, who almoſt conſtantly approve and diſapprove in the wrong place.

To create in young people a contempt of the erroneous and ill-judged applauſe of men, ſuch inſtances as the following ſhould be often laid before them, and the miſtakes of *common opinion* expoſed to their obſervation. That we ſee the moſt laborious, induſtrious, and uſeful part of mankind generally treated with neglect and contempt, and at the ſame time the idle, the inactive and moſt uſeleſs part of the ſpecies, I mean, the rich, who feed and riot, and fatten on the labours of their fellow-creatures, adored as gods upon earth. That we ſee mankind admire learning, wit and courage in men, and outſide beauty in the other ſex, and all the while neglect the leſs oſtentatious, but infinitely more valuable virtues of humility, meekneſs, prudence, benevolence, patience, and mortification. That the ſuperficial multitude have diſgraced the honeſt huſbandman, who employs himſelf in raiſing out of the earth what is the ſupport of the life of his fellow-creatures, with the contemptuous name of *Clown*, and have at the ſame time dignified thoſe wild-beaſts called warriors, who ſpend their lives in butchering their fellow-creatures, with the title of *Heroes* or *Great-men*. That according to the common opinion of mankind, it is no ſhame to get wealth by grinding the face of the poor, by craft, by ſcraping, and all the mean arts that can be practiſed with ſafety from the laws of the land; but it is a great ſhame to be poor for want of impudence to elbow mankind, or through too much narrowneſs of conſcience, or too much largeneſs of

of heart. That, according to the opinion of mankind, affliction is of all things the moſt to be dreaded, and proſperity the moſt to be deſired; whereas the truth is quite the contrary way: for that proſperity generally hurts mens virtue, whereas adverſity for the moſt part ſtrengthens the mind, and makes the heart better; ſo that the bulk of mankind being by divine providence ſubjected in the preſent ſtate to various hardſhips and miſeries, is a mark of the tenderneſs of the Governor of the world to his creatures. That according to common opinion, it is a greater happineſs to get and hoard up, than to deal out liberally and generouſly; whereas in truth, to beſtow with prudence on the deſerving and indigent is like a god, and to ſcrape together riches, like an earth-worm. That according to common opinion, it is a crime in a man of fortune not to live extravagantly, that is, according to the vulgar notion, ſuitably to his fortune. Whereas the truth is, that for a man of great wealth to ſpend his whole income without beſtowing a reaſonable proportion of it upon the truly indigent, is embezzling what was only *intruſted* to him, not *given* him; a great eſtate being properly a *ſtewardſhip* committed to a particular perſon for trial of his charity, and his abſtinence, as poverty is a trial of another ſet of virtues, and not the effect of any partiality of divine providence in his favour to the prejudice of other men.

A youth, early and frequently led to obſerve in theſe and innumerable other inſtances the falſe and erroneous ways the multitude have of judging of men and things, muſt ſee the folly of placing one's happineſs in their applauſe, and will thereby learn to deſpiſe the allurement of Ambition. And indeed it is the fault of his parents or inſtructors, if he be not made to underſtand, that he who never knew to diſtribute unſeen and unthanked, to ſteal

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opportunities of doing worthy actions, never to be known publickly, till read out of the records, by which we are to be judged at the laſt day; who never could condeſcend to what the erroneous world calls *Meanneſs*, for the ſake of doing good; that who never could do theſe things, and do them without ſo much as a wiſh for any other approbation than that of his conſcience and his Judge, and who has no reliſh for this feaſt of the mind in his private retirement, knows nothing of the diſintereſted love of God and of goodneſs for their own ſakes.

And, to prevent a young perſon's being inſnared by degrees, as he advances in life, into the love of money, and at length into covetouſneſs, he ought to be made to underſtand, that the only real value of riches is, their being capable of being applied to the purchaſe of the neceſſaries and conveniencies of life, and to the relief of the indigent. That the contents of all the mines of *Peru* are not in reality ſo valuable, as one acre of ground covered with wheat; and that a freſh egg is of more real worth than the diamond lately brought from the *Brazils*, of much the ſame bulk, which was valued at four hundred Millions; becauſe the firſt will ſave the life of a human creature from famine; but the latter is not capable of being applied to any ſort of uſe, beſides pleaſing the eye. That all above the conveniencies of life is abſolutely uſeleſs, and indeed troubleſome. That after a perſon has acquired ſuch a competency as will keep him and his family above dependence, and in eaſy circumſtances according to his ſtation in the world, it is not worth his while to go a ſtep out of his way for the ſake of gaining ten thouſand pounds more, becauſe he can but live conveniently at laſt, and has no occaſion to bring upon himſelf more cares and embaraſſments. That a few years will put an end to

the life of the youngeſt man alive, and that it will give him no more ſatisfaction on his death-bed to reflect, that he has fifty thouſand pounds in the funds, than that there are fifty thouſand ſhells at the bottom of the ſea. That, ſuppoſing every man infallibly certain of gaining an eſtate, who will take the pains for it, which is very far from being the caſe, exorbitant wealth and happineſs have nothing to do with one another, ſince we commonly ſee diſcontented faces in gilded chariots, and day labourers making merry in ſpite of toil and poverty. That the poſſeſſion of great wealth expoſes men to a thouſand inconveniencies and temptations, ſuch as, The incumbrance of a croud of ſervants and attendants, The continual buz of ſlaviſh flatterers and hangers-on, The fatigue of overſeeing great affairs, or the vexation of loſſes by entruſting them to others, and, which is worſe than all the reſt, The riſque of one's virtue, through the ſnares of the world, and the deceit of riches, which are ſo hard to reſiſt, that we find in fact the rich are, generally ſpeaking, perſons of the leaſt amiable or perfect characters. That the honours ſaid to attend on riches are a mere cheat; ſince the fulſome reſpect, that is paid to a rich man at his levee, is only a public proof given by the perſon, who pays it, of his own want of ſenſe, in being ſtruck with what is of no real worth in itſelf; and being paid to the wealth, and not to the perſon, who poſſeſſes it, is by no means worth envying.

And laſtly, as to Pleaſure, young people ought to be guarded as ſtrongly as poſſible againſt its allurements by being forewarned of its bewitching nature, and dangerous conſequences, of its unſatisfactorineſs, and the natural and conſtant tendency it has to raiſe unquiet and reſtleſs imaginations and deſires in the mind; but eſpecially by being led into a taſte of the *innocent* inſtead of the criminal

pleaſures, and the *mental*, inſtead of thoſe of the *ſenſes*. A taſte for knowledge, and retirement, if young people can be drawn into it, and of the converſation of the few old people who are chearful, knowing, communicative, and lovers of the converſation of youth, may do great ſervice toward preſerving them from this moſt dangerous and fatal ſnare. They ought to be told, That there are no true pleaſures but what are lawful, and that thoſe ſorts of enjoyments, which leave a ſting behind them, ought not to be called *pleaſures*, but *troubles*, and *torments*. They ought to be frequently put in mind, that it is only the good and virtuous who have any right to the pleaſures of life, or who indeed can truly enjoy them; for that it is a contradiction to ſuppoſe, that a perſon, whoſe conſcience is wounded by guilt, and whoſe mind (if he is not paſt thinking, which is ſtill a worſe ſtate) muſt be in continual pain through remorſe for what is paſt, and horror at the thought of what is to come, ſhou'd be capable of reliſhing any ſort of joy or comfort: but that a good man, whoſe mind is calm and undiſturbed, has both the advantage of freedom from pain or fear, and a proper diſpoſition for reliſhing the natural and innocent pleaſures of life, and is like to receive infinitely more happineſs from them than a wicked man, becauſe he may juſtly conſider them as the gifts of a tender and bountiful father, whoſe favour he has reaſon to hope for, which muſt give them an additional reliſh, and becauſe he expects nothing from them, but what they will really afford, and has ſtill in reſerve a higher happineſs, after the gratifications of ſenſe have done their part. Young people ought alſo to be led to conſider pleaſure as naturally and neceſſarily oppoſite to every thing that is manly or great, as it tends to ſoften and enervate the mind, and to render it unfit for encountering any difficulty, or applying

applying to any labour. They ought to be told, That, whatever men may say, in the hours of mirth and jollity, in defence of a voluptuous life, there needs no better confutation of the falshood of their reasoning, than what they themselves furnish: for, though most people in the gay time of life are continually crying out, that they have not had half their share of the pleasures of the world; in their old age, and on their death-beds they are generally found to lament, that they have enjoyed and indulged them a great deal too much. A youth ought to be told, that there is a great deal of danger, when he comes to die, of his having many neglects and omissions to repent of; but that there is no fear of his repenting on his death-bed, that he had omitted to see a particular new play on the first night, or slipt an opportunity of getting drunk, or of debauching a virgin; so that at least a life of sobriety and abstinence is on the *safe* side. Young people should also be prepared for opposing and confuting the frivolous and fallacious arguments commonly advanced by their thoughtless companions of their own age, in defence of a life of pleasure; of which the most formidable one I can at present remember, is the following, *viz.* Since God has given us desires and appetites, why should we not gratify them at all events? Which thundering piece of artillery may at once be silenced by only retorting the following question. Since God has so formed me, that when I am extremely heated with exercise, I have a great desire to cool myself as quickly as possible, why should I not throw off my cloaths, and expose myself to the air, though it should occasion my death? and since I have a great thirst, why should I not drink a plentiful draught of cold water, though it should give me a surfeit? and, in short, since God has given me a variety of appetites and inclinations, why should I not satisfy

them all at random, without the leaſt thought of the conſequences? They ſhould be taught, that there is no deſire or appetite natural to the human ſpecies, but what may be *innocently gratified*, and may alſo be *abuſed*; and that the rule to be obſerved with regard to all the natural inclinations and appetites, is, To gratify them only in ſuch a manner, and within ſuch bounds of moderation, as will beſt ſerve to gain the ends for which they were implanted in the human conſtitution, and that whoever breaks through this rule is guilty of a crime. They ſhould be forewarned, that taking a full ſwing of lawleſs pleaſure in youth is only treaſuring up for all the following years of life an inexhauſtible fund of pain and torment, and this upon the moſt favourable ſuppoſition, *viz.* That they afterwards repent of the follies of youth, which if it ſhould not happen, the conſequences are ſtill infinitely worſe. They ſhould likewiſe be ſhewn the abſurdity of reſolving (as is too commonly done) to indulge themſelves in all the various madneſs of youth, and to go on in a courſe of guilty pleaſure, with hopes of repenting of it afterwards. That for a perſon to do ſo, is to hope that he ſhall be heartily aſhamed and confounded at what he has done; to hope that he ſhall a thouſand and a thouſand times wiſh it undone; to hope that he ſhall hate and loath himſelf for what he has been guilty of; to hope that he ſhall ſuffer ten thouſand times more pain from ſhame and remorſe than ever he enjoyed pleaſure in the purſuit of criminal delights; to hope that he ſhall have the ſatisfaction of knowing himſelf to have been a fool and a madman; to hope that he ſhall have the happineſs of knowing, that he has done what may juſtly expoſe him to the divine vengeance; to hope, that he ſhall be obliged to undertake the diſagreeable and almoſt inſuperable taſk of rooting out confirmed habits, and planting oppoſite

oppoſite ones in their place, of parting with vices as dear to him as a right-hand or a right-eye*, and of wholly new modelling his mind; in ſhort, it is to hope, that he ſhall have the happineſs of ſeeing himſelf in great danger of final deſtruction. Bleſſed hopes! glorious proſpects! worthy for which to give up one's innocence and peace of mind in the preſent life, and the proſpect of happineſs in that which is to come.

Pleaſure being the moſt alluring and moſt dangerous of the three principal baits that draw in mankind to the ways of perdition, and being more peculiarly prevalent in the time of youth, I have been the more copious upon this head: but after all, I muſt repeat, that I know of no method, that will have any chance of being effectual for ſaving young people from its ſnares, without giving their minds a turn another way, and leading them into a taſte and love for objects and entertainments of a different nature.

By treating young people in this manner as *rational creatures*, and teaching them to exert their reaſon, and to judge rightly of men and things, as they are in themſelves, and as they were originally conſtituted by the Supreme Being, and not according to outward appearance, they would come out into the world, not as the moſt part of youth do from ſchools and colleges, with heads full of unwieldy knowledge, the greateſt part of which they can apply to no uſe in life, but with judgments in ſome meaſure ſettled and matured for action, and prepared for the difficulties of life by a ſort of anticipated experience.

But to come at length to the main intention of this Eſſay, I muſt own, it is to me very ſurprizing that many truly learned and ingenious men have been at ſo much pains in contriving plans for edu-

* *Matt.* xviii. 8, 9.

cation,

cation, and have all the while miſſed or overlooked the moſt excellent and moſt comprehenſive one that ever was or will be invented for forming and perfecting the mind, and raiſing it to the nature almoſt of angels, and this ſtate almoſt to that of Heaven, I mean The CHRISTIAN RELIGION. One author on the ſubject propoſes, that youth be taught principles of ſtrict honour, and a ſtrong averſion at falſhood; another, that they be very early taught to conſider themſelves as members of ſociety, and to love their country; and a third, that the examples of the great men of antiquity be ſet before them, and that they be often put in mind of their conduct, and directed to imitate it. All which ſchemes are ſo far extremely good. But, if it be certain, that there are no *Truths* of equal importance to mankind, with thoſe that are diſcovered by the Chriſtian revelation, that there are no ſuch ſublime or ſuch worthy *notions* of the *ſupreme Being*, no ſuch juſt notions of the nature of *Man*, no ſuch clear views of his *Duty* and way to *happineſs*, to be found any where elſe as in the Chriſtian revelation, nor ſuch a perfect and ſublime ſyſtem of *Morality*, nor ſuch a ſet of illuſtrious *Examples* of true greatneſs and heroiſm to copy after, nor ſuch views of the direful *Conſequences* of vice, nor ſuch full and well eſtabliſhed Proſpects of a final *Reward* to virtue communicated to mankind by any other means; why ſhould Parents or Inſtructors of youth ſtop ſhort, and not rather reſolve at once to take the only effectual and complete method of forming and eſtabliſhing the minds of thoſe under their care by making them thoroughly acquainted with the *Chriſtian Religion?*

That the implanting in the minds of youth a ſet of principles of virtue and religion upon the Chriſtian plan would be of the greateſt advantage to mankind conſidered either as individuals, or as members of ſociety,

ſociety, one would think, ſhould not need much reaſoning or argumentation to prove. And yet there are ſome, who, to palliate or excuſe their own neglect of their duty, affect to repreſent it as either *impoſſible* to be done with any conſiderable ſucceſs, or as of *inferior* conſequence; which only ſhews how men can blind or proſtitute their reaſon to ſerve indirect ends. Inſtead of going about to eſtabliſh the importance of a virtuous and religious education upon a long deduction of arguments, or upon authorities from the writings of the greateſt men of antient or modern times, I ſhall only take the liberty to leave with thoſe gentlemen the few following Queries, and then proceed without taking up a great deal of the leiſure of other readers, to whom the importance of the ſubject appears evident and unqueſtionable.

Quer. 1. Whether that period of the life of man, in which the mind is moſt tractable, moſt clear of all manner of prejudices and pre-engagements, moſt free from the cares of the world, and temptations either from without or from within, is not univerſally allowed to be the fitteſt for laying the foundation of all uſeful knowledge; and if ſo, why the time of youth is not equally proper for the ſtudy of Morality and Religion as of human literature?

2. Whether any one can pretend, That either the knowledge of the obligations of Morality, or the doctrines of the Chriſtian religion are harder to be comprehended than thoſe parts of human literature, which youth are uſually taught almoſt in their earlieſt years, as Grammar, Arithmetic, and the elements of Mathematics, *&c?*

3. Why it is by no means thought proper to leave people to find out by themſelves, after they arrive at years of diſcretion, the knowledge of Grammar or Numbers, the art of Writing, and the other parts

parts of improvement, which usually employ the first years of life, if it be proper (as some people seem to think) to leave them to themselves to find out a set of moral and religious Principles, and the art of governing their Passions, till they are past the proper time of life for improvements of almost all sorts, and come to be engaged amidst the cares and temptations of the world; or whether any one can alledge, That it is more dangerous for a person to be unfurnished in that sort of knowledge, which is necessary only for the present life, than in that which serves to prepare him for happiness in the life to come?

4. Whether there is any imaginable danger or any worse consequence, that can follow from implanting as early as possible in the minds of youth the principles and habits of virtue and religion, than That those principles and habits are likely to acquire the greater strength the earlier they are implanted, as all sorts of principles or habits are constantly known to do through length of time?

5. Whether the habits of Vice and Profaneness, which must of course take possession of an uncultivated mind, as naturally as weeds do of uncultivated ground, whether the various cares and avocations of life, which in riper years are ever intruding and withdrawing one's attention from his duty and the improvement of his mind, whether the innumerable temptations, which are continually soliciting our senses, and the prevailing force of almost universal example; whether all these together, I say, are not more than sufficient effectually to prevent any person, who has not in early youth had his mind tinctured with principles of Virtue and Religion, from ever acquiring them in any after part of his life?

6. Whether the only reason, why people brought up from their earliest years in the grossest errors and

and ſuperſtitions, as Heatheniſm and Popery, are ſo ſtrongly attached to thoſe abſurdities through their whole lives, is not The mere force of the prejudice of education; and ſince this prejudice is ſo powerful as to make men obſtinately retain, without daring to examine them, a ſet of irrational and contradictory notions, the abſurdity of which would appear ſtill more and more glaring as the judgment improves, if it were not for the prejudice of education; whether it is not well worth while to take the advantage of this prevailing prejudice, by implanting early in the minds of youth a ſet of rational principles, the juſtneſs and obligation of which their reaſon will ſhew them more and more clearly as it improves and enlarges, and which they will conſequently be through their whole lives doubly attached to, both from Education and Conviction.

7. Whether, of two perſons, one of which has had his mind in early youth eſtabliſhed upon virtuous and religious principles, and the other has been left to himſelf, the firſt has not a very great advantage of the ſecond, in caſe of their being both in the after part of their lives overpowered by temptation, and hurried from the ways of virtue and ſobriety into thoſe of pleaſure and ſenſuality; ſince the firſt has that within him, which will probably awaken him ſooner or later, and force him like the Prodigal in the goſpel, or *Noah*'s dove, to return to where he ſtray'd from, and to ſeek happineſs and peace where he knows by his own experience they are certainly to be found, *viz.* in Virtue and Religion; whereas the other having never been initiated in thoſe principles, and having no experience of the happineſs they give, can hardly either be ſuppoſed capable to judge how to attain that happineſs, or be expected to have any deſire for it.

In recommending to Parents and Inſtructors of youth to make thoſe committed to their charge acquainted with the *Chriſtian Religion*, I would be underſtood

derſtood to mean, The Religion of the NEW TESTAMENT. For that the end is by no means to be gained by teaching them any of the erroneous and inconſiſtent *ſyſtems*, which men of *weak* judgments or of *crafty* and deſigning tempers have ſpun out of their own brains, and impoſed upon mankind for true Chriſtianity with the ſanction of anathemas and fire and ſword. On the contrary, there is great danger in a young perſon's being in an authoritative manner commanded to believe a ſet of *Notions*, which his reaſon, as ſoon as he comes to the uſe of it, and begins to examine for himſelf, as many people do in this age and country of liberty, will ſhew him to be irrational and abſurd, leſt he ſhould conclude the *Chriſtian religion* to be irrational and abſurd, ſince he finds that *what he was taught* for the Chriſtian religion is ſo; and that he preſently grow entirely out of conceit of *revelation*, and turn at once downright *Deiſt*.

The Chriſtian religion may juſtly be called, according to the phraſe of its divine Author, † "An "eaſy yoke and a light burden." For it delivers no doctrines, *as neceſſary to be underſtood and believed*, but what are altogether as intelligible and conſiſtent with *Reaſon*, and the juſteſt *Notions* of the nature of God and the nature of man, as eaſily to be accounted for, and as much within our comprehenſion, as thouſands of facts we ſee actually take place in the *natural world*,* and conſequently muſt believe to

† *Matth.* xi. 30.

* Methinks thoſe long-headed gentlemen the Deiſts, before they go to work to pull the Chriſtian religion to pieces on account of ſome particulars in it, which they tell us they cannot comprehend, or reconcile to their notions, ſhould in the firſt place ſhew us, that they *can* comprehend all the myſteries in nature, and reconcile them to their notions. Before they tell us, that it is inconſiſtent with the notion of infinite Goodneſs to ſuppoſe, That God ſhould chooſe to forgive his offending creatures through an expiation and interceſſion rather than without

to be fit and right; nor does it eſtabliſh any laws, which it would not be much better for mankind, even in the *preſent* life, and without regard to futurity, to obſerve and regulate their conduct by: and ſince this is the character of our holy religion in itſelf, of what condemnation ſhall they be thought worthy, who, for the ſake of any *indirect* ends whatever, have clogged it with a heap of *Abſurdities* of their *own* invention, which *it knows nothing of*, and thus have laid a ſet of *ſtumbling-blocks* in the way of the honeſt mind, that otherwiſe would have readily and cheerfully embraced the truth.

I muſt alſo here beg leave to ſay, That I ſee no neceſſity, why the memories of young people ſhould be loaded, or their underſtandings puzzled with the more abſtruſe parts of revelation, the comprehending or believing of which is no where aſſerted in ſcripture to be neceſſary to ſalvation: For it is certain there are many parts of ſcripture, which will

out them, they ſhould ſhew us how it is conſiſtent with the notion of infinite goodneſs, that one half of the animal creation ſhould be made to be devoured by the other, and that ſome of the moſt beautiful and moſt harmleſs of God's creatures ſhould be expoſed to continual fear through their whole lives, and at laſt to a cruel death, for the ſake of ſupporting ſome other ſpecies of creatures, which to us ſeem to be the very blot of the creation, and the burden of the earth. Before they begin to diſpute the truth of the Incarnation, becauſe they cannot comprehend how One, who was before the creation, ſhould take upon him a human body, they ought firſt to ſhew us that they underſtand exactly how a human or any other ſpirit is firſt placed in the body it animates, and wherein the abſurdity lies, of ſuppoſing a ſpirit capable of being placed in a body created a thouſand years after it begun to exiſt, more than in ſuppoſing that a ſpirit may animate a body created an hour after it, or before it, or at the ſame time with it. And before they begin by long deductions and ſubtile reaſonings to invalidate the proofs of Chriſtianity, which is not founded in argumentation, but in ſimple facts incomparably better atteſted than any facts in *hiſtory*, they ſhould ſhew us, that all the relations in hiſtory, that are true, are incapable of being cavilled at.

never be rightly underſtood in this life: but it is no where aſſerted, that the clear underſtanding of thoſe difficult paſſages is *neceſſary to Salvation.*

And far leſs would I adviſe, that youth be taught to place the whole of religion in violent Zeal for any party or for any particular opinions. On the contrary, they ought to be from their earlieſt years prepoſſeſſed againſt all manner of narrowneſs or harſhneſs in judging of others, ſince the Great, the Wiſe, and the Pious have in all ages differed, and ever will differ, in particulars; but have at the ſame time always allowed one another full liberty of examining, and declaring their ſentiments. And indeed the wrath of man will never work the righteouſneſs of God. Perſecution or ill uſage on account of matters of opinion are not the ways to ſupport Truth; but have been invented and practiſed merely to aggrandize and ſupport Parties and worldly intereſts. To ſay, that the truths of religion are not able to ſupport themſelves upon a fair and candid examination, without aſſiſtance from ſecular power, is ſaying, That they are not agreeable to reaſon, or that their evidence is not ſufficient, or that the author of our religion committed a miſtake in prohibiting his apoſtles and followers, as he every where does, ever to make uſe of force, or to apply to the ſecular arm. Upon the whole, it is my judgment, that young people ought to be taught, That there is no *Hereſy* ſo *bad*, nor ſo *contrary* to the ſpirit of *Chriſtianity*, as, to believe it to be proper or lawful to *hate* or *perſecute* a fellow-creature and a brother, for an *Opinion*, which he declares, in the ſimplicity and ſincerity of his heart, he has impartially *examined*, and thinks he finds to be *agreeable* to the ſenſe of *Scripture*.

Firſt then, taking it for granted, that the youth, to be inſtructed in the Chriſtian religion, has had his mind from the earlieſt dawnings of reaſon formed

ed to the love of *Truth* for its own ſake, and to the *gentle* and *tractable* temper, which is neceſſary for one, who would ſubmit to the obedience of good and ſalutary *Laws*; taking it for granted, I ſay, that this has been done before the age of *ſix*, the firſt ſtep to be taken, is, in my opinion, to make him acquainted with the *Chriſtian Morality*. The beauties of the Chriſtian diſpoſitions of Humility, Meekneſs, Temperance, Benevolence, and the reſt, are obvious to the apprehenſion of a *Child:* for a ſenſe of right and wrong, and of the excellencies of virtue and the deformities of vice, is what appears in the human mind with the very *firſt* openings of reaſon. For this purpoſe that moſt perfect, and moſt ſublime of all ſyſtems of Morality, our Saviour's *Diſcourſe on the Mount*, Mat. v, vi, and vii, ought to be imprinted in indelible characters upon his underſtanding and memory. Whatever, through the diſadvantage of the bare literal tranſlation and of a few antiquated words, uſed by the tranſlators, is not obvious to him, ought to be explained, and himſelf over and over examined from time to time, to ſee that he retains the clear and full *ſenſe* of thoſe divine precepts upon his mind. He ought to be taught, that his everlaſting happineſs, and that of all men to whom Chriſtianity is known, depends upon his *forming* his mind and practice upon that perfect model. He ought to be every day told, That, if he do not acquire the *Diſpoſitions* there recommended, and obſerve the *Laws* there eſtabliſhed, he cannot poſſibly arrive at happineſs at laſt; as he neither can in himſelf be *qualified* for it, nor will the great Judge of all *confer* it on any who are diſobedient. He ought to be informed, that every degree of Anger, Malice, Pride, Obſtinacy, Falſhood, and ſo forth, are breaches of this awful and tremendous law, by which we are all to be judged at laſt:

and

and he ought to be taught to examine all the parts of his own conduct by it; and to know when he is guilty of a violation of any of its precepts, and when he swerves from that pattern of perfection.

A person had better be uninformed, or unsettled in his notions of any, or all other matters of science, than of *Morality*: for we are properly *moral* agents, and our everlasting state is to be determined according to the eternal rules of moral Right and Wrong, as they stand in the Divine mind. And in all sciences, except Morality, either our knowledge is scanty, or our opinions uncertain, our reasonings fallacious, our enquiries laborious, our disputes endless, in some our positions unintelligible by the bulk of mankind, and in others our discoveries useless. In Morality, our knowledge is perfect, our opinions are in the main agreed, our reasonings clear, our enquiries easy, our disputes (if there be any such) determinable from revelation, our positions intelligible to all capacities, and the knowledge of the subject absolutely necessary to our happiness both here and hereafter.

There is no young person, of a tolerable capacity, of the age of ten, or upwards, but may be led on gradually through a scheme or view of natural and revealed religion from the first principles of common sense in the following manner. First, No youth of that age is ignorant that God made him and all the world. Next, in order to give him some notion of the Supreme Being and his perfections, he may be easily led to judge, that a Being who could make the vast system of the universe, the earth, which is so great that there are many regions of it yet unknown *, and the sun, the

* Here it is to be supposed natural for an Instructor of youth to turn to a book of Geography, or put the youth in mind of what he has taught him of the greatness of the terraqueous globe.

planets,

planets, and fixed ſtars, ſo amazingly diſtant from us and from one another *, and all from nothing, muſt be poſſeſſed of immenſe power. That he who has created ſuch an endleſs variety of animate and inanimate creatures, all ſo nicely fitted for their ſeveral uſes, that the more we examine, the more ſkill, contrivance, and deſign we find †, muſt be a Being of inconceivable wiſdom. And that He, who has made ſuch ample proviſion of convenient and pleaſant habitations, of ſuitable food, and even of innumerable delicacies and varieties for his creatures ‖, muſt undoubtedly be endued with unbounded goodneſs and benevolence. Thus a youth may be convinced of three of the divine attributes, *viz.* infinite power, wiſdom, and goodneſs, almoſt by his bodily ſenſes. The others he may by degrees be led to conceive of, as well as his years and capacity will admit. After this, it is natural to aſk him, whether he does not think, that he and all reaſonable creatures are obliged to ſome kind of ſervice and duty to the Creator and Governor of all things, upon whom all depend, and to whom all creatures are indebted for whatever they enjoy or hope, and to whom they muſt be accountable at laſt. Then he may be made to underſtand, that if he ought to love, honour, and obey his earthly parents, he ought much more to love, honour, and obey the great Father and Creator of both his parents and himſelf, and of all mankind. That, if he ought to behave in the ſame manner to his inſtructors and teachers, he is much more ſtrongly bound to thoſe duties towards the God of wiſdom,

* And here it would be proper to ſhew him a general view of the magnitudes and diſtances of the heavenly bodies in any of the moſt ſimple and familiar books of aſtronomy.

† *Derham's Phyſico-theology, Nature diſplay'd,* &c. will be proper to conſult here.

‖ See the ſame, and various other authors on theſe ſubjects.

to

to whom his inſtructors owe their capacity to teach him, and to whom he himſelf owes his capacity for improvement. That, if it is baſe and wicked to the laſt degree to be forgetful of kindneſſes done him by men, who have it not in their power to do him any very great favours, it muſt be infinitely more ſo to be unthankful to Him, to whom he owes his very being and all he enjoys. And laſtly, that, if it be extremely fooliſh and abſurd for any one to diſobey or treat in a contemptuous manner a perſon in a ſuperior ſtation, who has it in his power to puniſh him, and who at the ſame time requires no obedience of him but what is juſt and proper, and is more for his own than his ſuperior's advantage, it is beyond conception impious and ridiculous to refuſe obedience to the ſupreme Lord and Ruler of all things, who can cruſh or deſtroy a world with a word, eſpecially ſeeing the obedience he requires is in itſelf highly reaſonable, and tends to the advantage and improvement of his creatures, and is not required of them from mere arbitrary will and tyrannical pleaſure, but for anſwering the ends of their creation, and to qualify them for happineſs.

After this, it is proper to inform a youth, that God has communicated to us his will by Jeſus Chriſt, and ſent him into the world to give us a more perfect Rule and Directory for our obedience than was ever known to mankind before, as well as to revive what moral knowledge through barbarity and vice was loſt, and that therefore higher degrees of ſtrictneſs and purity of life and manners will be required and expected of us, than of the reſt of mankind.

To hear the Chriſtian religion recommended, to ſee the beauty and propriety of moſt of its laws, and to let it paſs without oppoſing it, but at the ſame time without being in a rational manner convinced

vinced of its being truly of *divine original*, such a reception as this will never effectually engage any one to it, nor secure him from explaining away many very important parts both of a sound belief and of a strictly regular practice. But he, who receives and embraces it, because he has upon a thorough examination found it to bear the marks and characters of an appointment of God, will not venture to trifle with any of either its doctrines or precepts, but will be stedfast and unmoveable to the last, in the belief of the one and the practice of the other, in spite of all the trivial objections and cavils of Deists against its doctrines, or Libertines against its precepts. And he, who on rational grounds receives and embraces the Christian religion, and in the sincerity and honesty of his heart desires to believe and understand it as it is in scripture, without partiality for or against any particular doctrines or opinions pretended to be revealed in it, and who earnestly strives to his utmost power to form his mind and regulate his practice according to its laws; such a person, without doubt, is not far from the kingdom of God. It is therefore my opinion, that neither ministers from their pulpits, nor those who have the care of youth, can labour this point too much, nor employ too much time and pains in establishing those committed to their charge in the rational and well grounded *belief* of Christianity, especially in an age in which a set of vain and shallow pretenders to wit or reasoning are on all occasions endeavouring (unluckily enough indeed for themselves) to sap the foundations of it. We find in Scripture, that *Faith* or *Belief* is generally put for the whole of religion; and very justly: for it is the foundation upon which the whole must rest, and wherever it possesses the mind of a person in its full strength and evidence, it will

influence and over-rule his whole conduct, and affect his whole character. And that the firm Belief of genuine Chriſtianity is the moſt effectual means that can be imagined for ennobling and perfecting the human nature, is undeniably plain from comparing the character of the *bulk* of mankind in Heatheniſh countries, where the light of Chriſtianity has not ſhone, and in popiſh, where it has been extinguiſhed by error and ſuperſtition, with the character of the bulk of the Chriſtians of the firſt ages, who enjoyed it in its original purity, as they all ſtand in hiſtory. And that the lives and characters of pretended Chriſtians in ſucceeding ages have come ſhort of thoſe of the primitive times, is owing *alone* to the want of that ſtrong and ſteddy *belief* of it in its *original purity*, which they had. For its natural effect and tendency has ever been and ever will be the ſame, and wherever it is underſtood and embraced as it was at firſt delivered by its divine Author, it will produce its effect. And wherever it is fairly propoſed, undiſguiſed and uninjured by the *inventions* of men, with all its *evidences* and all its *excellencies* ſet in a ſtrong and proper light, it will not fail to produce conviction in any teachable and unprejudiced mind. Whoever therefore has it in his power to do juſtice to the Chriſtian religion, and has opportunities of promoting the reception of it among mankind, which I am ſure, Parents and Inſtructors of youth have, whoever has ſuch opportunities, and neglects them, muſt anſwer another day, for ſuch neglect, as he beſt can.

I do not think there are many young people, of ten or twelve years of age, or upwards, but what are capable of entering into ſuch reaſoning as the following, and perceiving the force of the following evidences of Chriſtianity.

In

In the first place, if it is plain from the passages here quoted from the New Testament *, that Jesus Christ declares himself to be the Saviour of the world and the Messenger of God to mankind, and if it can be shewn, that he has brought irresistible proofs of his commission, it is certainly the indisputable duty of all men, to whom these proofs are proposed, to believe him, and to obey his laws.

Next, if it can be shewn, That no person ever gave such *rational*, such *great* and such *amiable* views of the Supreme Being, nor such consistent notions of spiritual things, and of futurity † as he did, as will appear upon comparing the whole doctrines ‖ of the greatest of the Heathen philosophers with

* *Mat.* v. 17. vii. 21—23. ix. 6. x. 32, 33. xi. 27. xii. 28. xiii. 37, 41. xvi. 16—20, 27. xviii. 11. xix. 28. xx. 28. xxi. 16. xxiv. 30. xxv. 31. xxvi. 64. *Luke* ii. 49. iv. 21, 43. ix. 48. x. 16. xix. 10. xxii. 29, 69, 70. xxiv. 25—27. *John* i. 49, 50. ii. 16. iii. 13—19. iv. 25, 26, 34. v. 17, 19—47. vi. 27, 32—70. vii. 16, 17, 33. viii. 12, 59. ix. 4, 5. x. 1—42. xi. 25, 27, 41, 42. xii. 23—29, 34—37, 44—50. xiii. 31—34. xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, xviii. 36, 37. xx. 17, 21. It will be highly proper to turn to these and the following passages, and expound them to the youth; and where there are difficulties, to consult a good commentator.

† *Mat.* iv. 4. v. 3—12, 19, 20, 45, 48. vi. 6—9. 15, 18, 26, 32. vii. 11, 21—28. viii. 11. x. 15, 28—33. xi. 22. xii. 25, 30, 32, 36. xiii. 37—51. xviii. 14, 35. xix. 14. xxii. 29—32. xxxiv. 29—36. xxv. 1—46. *Luke* xi. 31, 32. xiii. 24—30. xv. 3,—7. xvi. 19,—32. xviii. 7. xix. 12—27. xxii. 29, 30. *John* iii. 3—13, 16—22. iv. 10. v. 17, 30. vi. 35—41, 44—46. viii. 44. 51. xi. 25, 26. xiv 2, 20, 23, 26. xvi. 13, 14, 23, 27, 32. xvii. 1—26.

‖ I say the *whole* doctrines, because, tho' it must be owned, That many of the Heathen Philosophers (who seem to have been raised by Providence for valuable purposes) delivered many sublime and useful doctrines and lessons of morality, considered separately from other parts of their works, it must be confessed at the same time, that they mixed with them many trifling, and hurtful tenets and rules of practice, which drew

with thoſe contained in the paſſages here quoted, it ſeems highly reaſonable to conclude, that he had thoſe notions from above, and was not a perſon of this world.

And if it can be ſhewn, That no lawgiver in the world ever propoſed a body of ſuch wiſe and good laws for ennobling men's natures and conducting their lives *, who can doubt, that his wiſdom was more than human.

But farther, if it can be ſhewn, That almoſt innumerable antient prophecies of the Old Teſtament were fulfilled in him, and in him only †, is it not reaſonable to conclude he really was the Saviour of the world intended in thoſe prophecies?

upon them the contempt of the people of thoſe times, and greatly leſſened the benefit mankind might have otherwiſe received from them: whereas our Saviour's doctrines and precepts (as they ſtand in the New Teſtament free from perverſions and miſrepreſentations) are *all* excellent, and *all* conſiſtent, and take in whatever was valuable in the writings of the Heathen Philoſophers, and leave out all that was trifling or hurtful.

* *Mat.* iv. 7, 10. v, vi, vii, x. 16, 28, 32, 33. xii. 12, 36, 50. xv. 3—21. xvi. 24—28. xviii. 3—5, 7—9, 15—18, 21—35. xix. 3—10, 14, 17—30. xx. 26—28. xxiii. 3—28. xxiv. 46, 51. xxv. 1—46. *Luke* viii. 15. ix. 62. x. 30, 41, 42. xi. 28, 41. xii. 15—21, 33, 34. xiii. 2—5, 24—30. xiv. 12—15, 25—34. xv. 11, 32. xvi. 9—31. xvii. 10—15. xix. 12—27. xx. 3, 4. xxi. 34. xxii. 38. *John* iv. 23, 24. v. 24. vi. 27, 29. viii. 34. xii. 25, 26, 44—48. xiii. 14, 15, 34, 35. xiv. 15, 23. xv. 2, 10, 12.

† *Geneſ.* iii. 15. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxi. 12. xxii. 18. xxvi. 5. xxviii. 14. xlix. 10. *Numb.* xxiv. 8, 17. *Deut.* xviii. 15. 2 *Sam.* xxii. *Job* xix. 25. *Pſal.* ii, viii, xvi. 8—11. xviii, xxii. 1, 6—31. xl. 6, 7. xlv, lxii, lxviii. 18. lxix. 9, 21. lxxii. 17. lxxx. 17. xci, cx, cxviii. 22. *Iſa.* iv. 2. vii. 14. ix. 2, 6, 7. xi. 1—5. xxviii. 16. xxxii. 1. xxxv. 5. xl. 3. xlii. 1—4, 6—8. xlix. 5. l. 4—10. liii. 2—12. lv. 1—5. lxi. 1, 4. lxiii. 1—9. *Jerem.* xxiii. 5, 6. xxxi. 22. xxxiii. 15—26. *Ezek.* xxxiv. 23, 24. xxxviii. 24. *Dan.* ii. 44. vii. 13. ix. 26. *Hoſ.* xi. 1. *Micah* v. 2. *Hagg.* ii 7. *Zach.* iii. 8. vi. 12. ix. 9. xii. 10. xiii. 7. *Mal.* iii. 1—4. iv. 5.

And,

And, if it be evident, that he was so far from gaining any temporal advantage by setting up his religion in the world, that he exposed himself to all manner of abuse, and to death itself ‡ by it, and that it was so far from flattering the vices and wicked inclinations of mankind, that it directly opposed and exclaimed against them ‖; who can imagine he had any indirect views in it, or any design to impose on the world.

And, if it be certain, from the history of his life, that he performed almost innumerable miracles* in a publick manner, as healing all sorts of diseases, casting out evil spirits, calming tempests, and even raising the dead, which never were denied either by Jews or Heathens †, and were the completion of various predictions by the antient prophets; that his resurrection was attested by numbers, who gave their lives in witness of the truth of it, in which it was impossible they should be deceived, it being a mere matter of fact, and as plain from the persecution they exposed themselves to by their adherence to this religion, that they had no design to deceive others; that a great variety of miracles were performed by his followers in attestation of their doctrine §; which miracles they declared to be performed for that very purpose, and which were performed before multitudes of enemies and unbelievers, in an age and in countries remarkable for learning, under all manner of disadvantages from the hatred

‡ *Matt.* xxvi. 1—5, 45—75. xxvii. 1—50. compared with the two or three last chapters of *Mark*, *Luke* and *John*.

‖ See note (*) in pag. 36.

* *Matt.* viii. 3, 13, 15, 16, 26, 28. ix 6, 20, 30, 33. xi. 5. xii. 15, 22. xiv. 32, 36. xv. 28, 30. xvii. 18. xix. 2. xx. 34. *Mark* i. 34. iii. 5.

† Grotius, *Of the Truth of the Christ. relig.*

§ *Acts* ii. 4, 43. iii. 7. iv. 33. v. 5, 10, 12, 15, 16, 32. vi. 8. viii. 13, 17. ix. 17, 34, 40. x. 46. xiii. 11. xiv. 10. xvi. 18. xix. 11, 12. xx. 12. xxviii. 5, 8, 9.

of thoſe in power, and were not like magic tricks, ſuddenly over, but of a permanent nature, and might bear being re-examined; that public teſtimony was given by Heaven itſelf in favour of the apoſtles by ſeveral amazing prodigies at once, in the ſight of a multitude, who, to the aſtoniſhment and conviction of three thouſand people in one day, heard them ſpeak in a variety of languages they had never learned *; that this religion, levelled directly againſt the favourite vices and inclinations of men, ſtript of all outward pomp or ſhew for catching the admiration of the multitude, was ſpread through the whole world by a few mean, illiterate perſons, that it was atteſted by thouſands of martyrs, and that its doctrines and laws produced a greater effect upon the lives and manners of mankind, than the labours of all the heathen philoſophers put together ‡, and that it was eſtabliſhed in ſpite of perſecution, without aſſiſtance from ſecular power ‖; that Jeſus Chriſt foretold his own death and reſurrection §, the univerſal ſpreading of his religion ‡‡, the perſecution of his followers **, the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, and the captivity and diſperſion of the Jews ††, all which came to paſs accordingly; if theſe facts be all certain and indiſputable, what more convincing proof can be deſired of Jeſus Chriſt's being truly, what he declares himſelf, the Saviour of the world, and the only full diſcoverer of the will of God to mankind.

It does not appear to me, that there is any thing in all this above the capacity of moſt youths of ten

* *Acts* ii.

‡ *Acts* ii. 41, 44—47. iv. 4, 34. v. 12—14. ix. 31. xvii. 10, 12, 34. xix. 18, 20, *&c.* See what is ſaid on this ſubject, pag. 34. ‖ *Acts* ibid. *&c.*

§ *Matt.* xvi 21. xvii. 12. xx. 18. xxvi. 24, *&c.*

‡‡ *Matt.* xxiv. *Mark* xiii. 10. xiv. 9, *&c.*

** *Matt.* v. 11. x. 17—36. xvi. 24. xxiv. 9, *&c.*

†† *Matt.* xxiii. 37, 38. xxiv. 2, 15—23, 28, 39—41. *Luke* xix. 41. xxi. 20, *&c.*

or

or twelve years of age and upwards; or that a youth of that age is not as capable of seeing the force of these arguments in support of Christianity, when laid before him in a manner suitable to his age, as a man of Forty. And the least smattering of any sort of knowledge received in youthful years, while the mind is free and unprejudiced, the imagination warm and lively, and the memory unburdened with a variety of subjects, is hardly to be conceived. Therefore, if any thing be worth learning, or understanding clearly and perfectly, it is of infinite advantage to begin the study of it in the time of youth, rather than to put it off till riper years come on, with all their various cares, avocations and distractions.

What is wanting in this short and imperfect sketch of a few of the evidences of Christianity may abundantly be supplied by the judgment of the parent or instructor with the assistance of a few of the best books on the subject, as Grotius *On the truth of the Christian religion*, Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity*, *Dr.* Clarke's *Evidences of revealed religion*, in his book *On the Being and Attributes of God*, &c. In which last mentioned masterly work there is a brief view of prophecy and its completions, which I would recommend to all, who have the care of youth, to give them some insight into, as it will prove an extremely delightful and instructing entertainment to them, and will confirm them most powerfully in the belief of revelation. For who can entertain the least doubt of the truth of a revelation, which shews, by the exact completion of its almost innumerable predictions, that it was given by One, who foreknew what was to happen in the most distant ages to come, of which completion every impartial enquirer may be satisfied, who will take the pains to compare the predictions with the events as they stand recorded in history.

I will

I will here add, for the uſe of Parents and Inſtructors of youth, the following brief, but comprehenſive view of the ſcheme of Chriſtianity, the ground-work of which was formed (for private uſe) by a gentleman, whoſe writings on Divine ſubjects have given great pleaſure and improvement to many; but whoſe primitive and exemplary piety and purity of life is his beſt and moſt prevailing Work in honour of religion.

The Chriſtian religion is the publication of an Act of grace to a rebellious world, and of the terms upon which God will mercifully receive it into favour.

The views it exhibits are theſe.

1. God, the original of all being, the Father and Governor of the world.*

2. His creature Man, who was originally obliged to a perfect obedience to all the laws of God, and thereupon inſured of a happy immortality, fallen from his firſt ſtate by diſobedience. †

3. The Son of God incarnate voluntarily giving up his life as a ſacrifice of expiation ‡ for the ſins of man-

* See Note (†) pag. 35.

† *Rom.* iii. 10, 19—31. v. 12, 14, 18, 19. x. 5. 1 *Cor.* xv. 21, 22. *Gal.* iii. 12, 22. *Epheſ.* ii 1, *&c.*

‡ To attempt to ſettle the diſpute concerning the true notion of the *expiation* made by our Saviour, or to determine in what ſenſe he is ſaid in Scripture to have *given his life a ranſom*, to have *laid down his life for the ſheep*, to be the *propitiation*, the *Lamb*, or *victim*, that *taketh away the ſins of the world*; to attempt, I ſay, to ſettle that diſpute in this little Tract, would be entirely vain and from the purpoſe. But I think all ſides muſt own, that the expreſſions of this ſort in Scripture being ſo many and ſo direct, give ſufficient authority to conclude, that whatever the ſacrifices under the Jewiſh œconomy were *typically* with regard to ceremonial pollution, that the death of Chriſt was *really* with regard to moral. Whether either of theſe is rightly and to their full extent underſtood at this day, or which is the right notion, and which the wrong, muſt be left to the deciſion of the learned. The comfort is, That all that part

mankind, whereby at the same time God's displeasure at sin is clearly set forth to the view of all his creatures, and likewise his willingness to forgive offenders upon any terms consistent with the honour of his laws, or in other words, hereby Almighty God discovers himself in the character both of the wise and righteous Governor, and also the tender and merciful Father of his creatures *.

4. The same glorious Person by being blameless in his life, and at last obedient even to death, setting a perfect example before mankind both of obedience to the laws of God, and of resignation to his will †.

5. The same glorious Person manifesting to mankind, the perfections of God, and declaring his will and our duty in a more sublime and perfect manner than ever was done before, and in an authoritative manner, as one who brought convincing proofs of his commission from heaven for that purpose, and upon the same authority assuring mankind of the

part of the theory of the Christian religion that is *necessary* to be comprehended clearly, is *simple* and *intelligible*, and comes to us attended with super-abundant evidence. As for those doctrines of Revelation, which will bear various explanations, and concerning which the best reasoners differ, being no where in Scripture represented as *necessary* to salvation, while ingenious and pious men exercise their wits, without entering into controversy, in endeavouring to form just notions of them, and to get the better of their difficulties, they employ themselves incomparably better, than they could in the pursuit of either Riches, Power, or Pleasure, and the true notions of them, and their various connexions with things to us at present wholly unknown, perhaps with other systems and orders of Beings, and the extensive and glorious views they may hereafter open to us, may probably furnish entertainment for ages, and we may then both comprehend them clearly, and see the propriety of their being laid before us, even in this life, though not to be fully understood till the next.

* See Note (†) pag. 35.

† 2 *Cor.* viii. 9. *Philip.* ii. 5. *Heb.* ii. 9, 17. iv. 15. v. 8. 1 *Pet.* ii. 21.

terms upon which guilt was to be forgiven, and acceptance to be found *.

6. On account of the interceſſion † of the Meſſiah, the want of that perfect obedience mankind are originally obliged to, the defect of which made an expiation and interceſſion neceſſary, is forgiven, and thorough repentance for all our offences, and a candid reception and firm belief of the Chriſtian religion, when propoſed, and ſincere endeavours to obey its laws and attain the perfection of its graces and virtues, accepted, and made the condition of pardon and everlaſting happineſs ‡. And the Chriſtian graces and virtues are, Love, Reverence, Gratitude, and Obedience to God, Benevolence to men, Humility, Meekneſs, Purity, Sincerity, Mercy, Charity, Contempt of riches, honours, pleaſures, and all earthly things, Heavenly-mindedneſs, Truſt in the Divine providence and reſignation to it, Chaſtity, Temperance, Submiſſion to governors in all civil matters, Forgiving of injuries, Loving our enemies, Courage to ſtand up for the truth in ſpite of the applauſe or threatnings of men, Vigilance and attention to the concerns of futurity, Watchfulneſs againſt temptations from within, againſt the weakneſs of human nature, and the allurements of the world, Prudence without cunning, Zeal without heat or rancor, Steddineſs without obſtinacy, and ſo forth §: The practice of every one of which virtues, and the attainment of every one of which graces or diſpoſitions is in itſelf, naturally, and abſtracting from our Saviour's injunction, abſolutely

* See Note (*) pag. 36.

† *Heb.* ii. 17, 18. iii. 1. iv. 15. v. 1—11. vii. 22—28. ix. 24. x. 21, 22.

‡ *Acts* ii. 38. iii. 19, 26. *Rom.* iii. 24—29. iv. 5, 16, 24, 25. v. 1, 2, 10. vi. 1—23. *Galat.* iii. 6—14. *Epheſ.* ii. 5—10. *Philip.* iii. 9. *Heb.* x. 17—21. 1 *John* i. 7. ii. 2.

§ See Note (*) pag. 36.

neceſſary

neceſſary to qualify us for enjoying that happineſs, to which the Chriſtian religion is intended to raiſe thoſe who embrace it.

7. Thoſe, to whom Chriſtianity is propoſed, obliged, after a candid and ſincere examination of its proofs, to receive it, and ſubmit themſelves to its laws *.

8. Two very ſimple but ſignificant obſervances appointed by the Author of our religion, as outward teſts of our profeſſion, to wit, Baptiſm, and the Lord's Supper. The firſt intended as a ceremony of initiation into his religion, and the ſecond as a Memorial of Him, and of what he has done for us, particularly of his ſufferings and death †.

9. The aſſurance of heavenly aſſiſtance to ſupport the faithful, penitent, and obedient Chriſtian in the performance of the duties of religion, and in the difficulties of the preſent ſtate ‡.

10. The future reſurrection of all mankind from the dead, aſcertained by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt §.

11. The final retribution of everlaſting happineſs or unſpeakable miſery to every perſon according as they have lived agreeably to the divine laws or contrariwiſe ‖.

* *Matt.* viii. 21—28. x. 14, 15, 32, 33. xi. 6. xii. 40, 42. xiii. 19—23. xvi. 24—28. xxi. 33—44. xxii. 1—14. *&c.*

† *Matt.* xxvi. 26. xxviii. 19. *Luke* xxii. 17. *Acts* ii. 38. viii. 37. x. 47. 1 *Cor.* xi. 23.

‡ *Rom.* viii. 9—16, 26. 1 *Cor.* iii. 7, 16. vi. 19. xii. 8. *Theſſ.* v. 19.

§ See Note (*) pag. 35. 1 *Cor.* vi. 14. xv. 12—22, 35—58. 2 *Cor.* iv. 14. v. 1. xiii. 4. *Coloſ.* i. 18. iii. 1—4. *Theſſ.* iv. 13, 14, 16. v. 10. *Jam.* iii. 21, 22. iv. 13. 1 *Pet.* i. 3. *Rev.* xx. 4—7. See alſo *Matt* xxii. 29.

‖ See Note (†) pag. 35. and *Rom.* ii. 5—11, 16. 1 *Cor.* iv. 5. 2 *Cor.* v. 10. 2 *Theſſ.* i. 6—11. 1 *Pet.* v. 4. 2 *Pet.* iii. 10, 14. *Jude* 13. *Rev.* ii. 7, 10, 11, 17, 23, 26—28. iii. 5, 12, 21. vii. 15. xiv. 11. xx. 4, 12. xxi. 6. xxii. 7, 12, 14.

12. The future appearance of Jesus Christ, as Judge of the whole human race, to allot to every man his portion in the next life *.

I am sensible this view of the Christian scheme is rather proper for young people, who are arrived at some ripeness of judgment, than for such whose tender years render them unfit for reasoning or judging of abstracted subjects. But I am convinced any parent or instructor of youth, endued with a tolerable gift of communicating, might, with a little explaining here and there, cause any youth of about fifteen years of age to enter fully into all the parts of it. The advantages arising from explaining and enlarging on the passages of scripture above quoted, and from warmly recommending and insisting on the duties and dispositions above mentioned, are not to be conceived. Such methods frequently and diligently practised can hardly fail (through the blessing of God) to work the Christian graces and virtues into the very soul, and to mould and form the young and tender mind to that model of perfection.

Blessed work! Delightful task! Heavenly employment! Who would not rather desire to improve and ennoble a rational, immortal mind, which from the first laying of a foundation of virtue and religion in it, will be ever growing more and more perfect, advancing farther and farther in all that is truly great and worthy, and approaching more and more near to a resemblance of its Creator, than to build a tower or a city, which from the day it is finished, is every hour hastening to decay, and must at last be involved and lost in the general and universal ruin of this world and all things upon it? Who would not rather desire to have the pleasure to reflect on his death-bed, That he had had a considerable hand in directing one fellow-creature to the way that leads to happiness, and in prevailing on

* See Note (†) pag 25.

him

him to enter upon it, and keep ſteddily to it, than, That he had for the ſake of his own glory or that of his king, involved thouſands in miſery, ſtrew'd the fields with carnage, and laid waſte the fair face of God's creation?

To finiſh what I intend to ſay upon a Method of inſtructing youth in the knowledge of revealed religion, I will ſubjoin the following general view of the whole body of Revelation, which, if explained and enlarged upon properly, may ſerve to lead young people, come to the years of fifteen or upwards, to form worthy and ſublime conceptions of it and of its divine Author, and excite their curioſity to attain a perfect and particular underſtanding of it.

Holy Scripture contains a brief, but uniform and conſiſtent view (given at very diſtant ages of the world, by many different perſons, inſpired and conducted by a Spirit who ſaw clearly through futurity) of all the tranſactions of Almighty God, that were proper to be revealed to mankind, with regard to the rational inhabitants of this world during the whole period of its being inhabited (at leaſt by our ſpecies) beginning with its firſt change from a Chaos to an habitable world *, and concluding with its being reduced again to a Chaos by fire †, giving ſome account either hiſtorically or prophetically of almoſt every thing great or important that has been or is to be tranſacted upon the vaſt theatre of the world, and opening a view beyond death and time into eternity, bringing to light the world of ſpirits, with clear, ſublime, and rational notions of the perfections of God and his will, and the duty of mankind, and their means to gain happineſs, and the only rational and conſiſtent notions of futurity, that are any where to be found, and innumerable

* *Gen.* i. 1.

† *Rev.* xx. 14.

intereſting

intereſting truths, which no human ſagacity could ever have found out, or ſo much as thought of, not only enlightening thoſe countries on which its direct beams have ſhone with their full ſplendor, but even in ſpite of the clouds of Heatheniſm and ſuperſtition breaking through and affording a glimmering light to the moſt barbarous nations, without which they had been buried in total darkneſs and ignorance as to divine and ſpiritual things. The outlines of the immenſe and various proſpect it exhibits, are theſe.

1. The reducing of this world from a Chaos to an habitable ſtate *.

2. The creation of the firſt of mankind in a ſtate of innocence and immortality †.

3. His fall from that ſtate to one obnoxious to death by an act of diſobedience ‡.

4. A dark prophecy of the reſtoration of him and his poſterity to the favour of God and immortality (after death) by Jeſus Chriſt §.

5. A flood ſent to deſtroy all mankind for their exceſſive wickedneſs, except one virtuous family ‖: a ſtanding example to all ages, of the different conſequences of obedience, and irregularity.

6. The term of man's life ſhortned on account of the bad uſe the antediluvians had made of its great length **.

7. Mankind degenerating into idolatry, ſcattered over the face of the earth, to prevent their ſetting up an univerſal idolatrous empire ††.

8. A particular family choſen for the ſingular piety of *Abraham* its head, to the one true God,

* *Gen.* i. 2—11.
† *Ibid.* 26. ii. 7.
‡
‡
§ *Ibid.* iii. 6.
‖ *Ibid.* vi. 5, 21—24.
** *Ibid.* vi. 3. xi. 10—27.
††. *Ibid.* xi. 1—10.

amidſt

amidſt the the univerſal idolatry and polytheiſm of all nations, and the deſcendants of it declared by prediction to be God's peculiar people, ſeparated from the idolatrous nations to be a light to the reſt of the world and to preſerve his worſhip from being loſt, and promiſes given, that from among them ſhould ariſe the Reſtorer of Mankind. The deſcendants of Abraham by a peculiar providence carried into Egypt, to communicate ſomething of the knowledge of the true God to the people of that country, and by the ſame means to other countries, Egypt being eſteemed the mother of learning and arts, and having a great influence over the other nations. His numerous poſterity after a certain time brought out of Egypt again, and with many miraculous interpoſitions of providence conducted through a vaſt wilderneſs, and at laſt eſtabliſhed in a country aſſigned them. The antient Pagan inhabitants of that country driven out before them, as a token of God's diſpleaſure with their idolatry and other crimes, as a warning to the Iſraelites to avoid what they ſaw bring on their ruin, and as a proof to all nations, that the victorious God of Iſrael was the true God, and the impotent gods of the nations only idols. The ſame people appointed to be examples to all nations of God's goodneſs to the obedient, and his ſeverity againſt diſobedience. If they continued attached to the worſhip of the true God, they were to be a repoſitary of the true religion, and if they revolted from him, they were, as a puniſhment, to be ſcattered abroad into all countries, and their diſperſion was to prove the ſpreading of the knowledge of the true God over the world. But, after all their diſobedience and their puniſhments, they were to be reſtored at laſt, and to be raiſed to higher dignity than ever. All which peculiar honours beſtowed on this people (the poſterity of Abraham) were in-

tended for a ſtanding proof, during a period of near 4000 years already, and how much longer God knows, of how much value in the ſight of the ſupreme Being the ſingular piety and conſtancy of Abraham was, and that he thought he could not (ſo to ſpeak) do favours enough even to the lateſt poſterity of that eminently good man, who had greatly ſtood up alone for the worſhip of the true God againſt an idolatrous world; in which light alſo the ſaving of Noah and his family at the flood, and of Lot at the deſtruction of Sodom, are to be conſidered. A body of civil laws given to the Iſraelites by God himſelf, who places among them a viſible glory, as a mark of his peculiar preſence, and declares himſelf their King and Governor. A body of religious ceremonies, interwoven with their civil polity, appointed them for many wiſe and uſeful reaſons, ſuch as, 1. To typify the expiation that was afterwards to be made by Jeſus Chriſt. 2. To be a yoke and puniſhment to the Jews for their frequent deviations into idolatry. 3. To keep them always in mind of their being under a theocracy, to which a ſet of religious obſervances enjoined by law was ſuitable. 4. For the ſake of many noble morals couched under the outward ceremonies. 5. In compliance with thoſe early and unimproved ages of the world, and the genius of that people, for whoſe groſs apprehenſions a religion perfectly internal and ſpiritual was not proper. 6. To keep them ſeparate from the nations around them, as it has always been the outward ceremonials of religion that have made the diſtinctions; and for many other reaſons too tedious to mention *.

9. The

* *Gen.* xii. 1—4. xiii. 14—18. xv. 1—19. xvii. 1—9. xxii. 15—19. xxvi. 5. *Exod.* iii. 6, 8, 15. vi. 3. xiii. 21,

9. The hiſtory of that people, partly related and partly foretold, during a period of above 3000 years, in which the various viciſſitudes they underwent are ſhewn to be owing to the particular interpoſition of providence, and are all along the immediate conſequence of their obedience or diſobedience *; from which the greateſt and moſt important Moral, that can be conceived, may be drawn, *viz.* That Obedience is the way to gain the favour of God, in which the happineſs of all created beings conſiſts, and that Diſobedience is the ſure way to provoke his diſpleaſure, which implies in it the moſt perfect miſery any nation or perſon can be reduced under.

10. A ſucceſſion of inſpired men raiſed up among them, to call them from time to time to their duty, and denounce againſt them the judgments which were to be the conſequence of diſobedience †.

11. Predictions given by the ſame prophets, of the revolutions of moſt of the great ſtates and empires of the world ‡.

12. Diſperſion of the Iſraelites, according to the threatnings of Heaven denounced by the prophets, for diſobedience to their God and King §.

13. The coming of the Meſſiah, and his kingdom, more and more clearly held forth by predictions,

21, 22. xiv. 19—22. xvi. 32—36. xix. 4, 5, 6. xxiii. 23, 24, 32, 33. xxiv. 16, 17. xxix. 45, 46. xxxii. 8. *Numb.* xiv. 14, 15. *Deut.* i. 8, 30. ii. 25 33. iii. 22 iv. 6, 7, *&c* vii. 2, *&c.* xi. 23. xii. 1—4, *&c.* See alſo (for there would be no end of quoting particular paſſages) ſeveral of the Pſalms, and the Prophets, St. Stephen's ſpeech, *Acts* vii. the beginning of the Epiſt. to the Rom. and that of the Heb. and Lowman, of the Jewiſh Polity, Spencer, de legib. Jud. Patr. on the O. Teſt. Hammond, Ainſworth, Joſ. Mede, Prideaux, Univerſ. Hiſt. Law's Theory of relig. Stillingfleet's Orig. ſacræ, *&c.*

* See *Exod. Joſh. Judg.* 1 *Sam.* 2 *Sam.* 1 *Kings*, 2 *Kings*, 1 *Chron.* 2 *Chron. Ezra*, *Nehem. Eſther*, and the Prophets.

† The Prophets *Sam. Iſa. Jerem.* &c.

‡ *Ibid.* and *Rev.*

§ *Jerem.* xxxix.

from the first obscure one, "That the seed of the "woman should bruise the head of the serpent," given immediately after the fall, down through a period of four thousand years to those plain ones given by Zacharias the priest, Simeon, Anna, and by John the Baptist his immediate forerunner; and thus the will of God and his important designs with regard to mankind opened by degrees, every great prophecy carrying on the view to the last glorious ages, till at length our Saviour himself comes as a light into the world, and carries his views and discoveries immensely beyond all the past lawgivers, philosophers, and prophets, opening a prospect into eternity, and bringing life and immortality to light ‖.

14. The history of our Saviour's birth, life, miracles, doctrines, prophecies, death, resurrection and ascension ††.

15. Records of the establishment of his religion, and the firm adherence of his followers in spite of persecution *.

16. Addresses from the first propagators of Christianity to their proselytes, explaining more fully the doctrines of religion, and encouraging them to constancy in it †.

17. The last charge of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, to the Overseers of the first societies of Christians, *viz.* the seven churches of the Lesser Asia, communicated in vision to John one of his Apostles ‡.

18. Predictions of the future state of the church from the apostolic age forward, particularly its degeneracy into popery, and a prospect of the consummation of all things §.

‖ See note (*) pag. 37.
†† The gospels of *Matt. Mark, Luke,* and *John.*
* *Acts.*
† *Rom.* to *Rev.*
‡ *Rev.* ii, iii.
§ *Ibid.* iv. *et seq.* to the end.

It

It being obvious, that all young people ought to be taught to pray, there need be the leſs ſaid on that head. They ought to be made to conſider addreſſing the ſupreme Being as a duty neceſſarily incumbent on all finite rational ones, ſeeing they all depend abſolutely upon Him. They ought to be taught to think of prayer as the moſt awful and ſerious duty of religion, and as an addreſs to the greateſt of Beings, in whoſe preſence the very angels and archangels of Heaven, compared with whom the kings of the earth are but worms, are ſaid in ſcripture to veil their faces, and to proſtrate themſelves before him. They ought by no means to be ſuffered to uſe any words in prayer, which they do not underſtand, nor to ſay over conſtantly the ſame form by rote, which creates in them a contempt of that important exerciſe of religion, and makes it tedious and irkſome to them; but ſhould be furniſhed with variety of matter ſuitable to their age and underſtandings. And the prayers they uſe ought by no means to be of an immoderate length, a fault which the moſt pious people are apt to deviate into; though one would wonder how they come to do ſo, ſince there are in ſcripture ſo many expreſs cautions againſt it, and ſince the pattern ſet by our Saviour himſelf is ſo remarkably ſhort, and all the others in ſcripture are of a very moderate length.

They ought alſo to be properly prepared for partaking of the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, and taught to conſider it in its juſt light, *viz.* As a Memorial of the Author of our religion, eſpecially of his death, as a public atteſtation of our being his diſciples and followers, and as an evidence of our perfect love and benevolence for our fellow-Chriſtians.

It may perhaps be expected that on this occaſion ſomething ſhould be ſaid on the ſubject of the female Education. But being unwilling to ſwell this

little Tract a great deal beyond the size I originally intended it, I shall say the less upon the head.

If the female part of our species are as truly rational and accountable creatures as the male sex, one would think, their being taught to speak French, to write, or rather to scrawl, to work with a needle, to come into a room genteelly, to dress neatly, to sing or touch a spinnet skillfuly, and to dance gracefully, should hardly be looked upon as an education sufficient to qualify them for usefulness in their proper sphere in this world, and for happiness in the world to come. Nay, I should think it no difficult task to prove, That every one of the above accomplishments (as they are called) except that of writing, if it were done to the purpose, and handling their needle, may do them incomparably more prejudice than real service, if they are not constantly kept in mind, That they are all trifling and contemptible in themselves, serving only as ornaments or trappings, which may a little (and but a little) set off the less conspicuous but infinitely more valuable beauties of the mind, to wit, Good-nature, Prudence, Virtue, and Religion: and that, where these internal beauties are wanting, the outside ornaments of the person serve only to make the defect of real inward worth the more conspicuous. That young Ladies may in fact be with success instructed in principles of virtue and maxims of prudence, and that they may be made to form very clear and rational conceptions of the doctrines of the Christian religion, and to see the beauty of its precepts, is what I know to be practicable, because I have seen the happy effects of such pious and worthy labours of both parents and teachers: and I hope there are many instances of parents and teachers of young Ladies, who see their success in such methods, and resolve to continue them.

I have already observed, That it is of great consequence to the youth of both sexes, that they be early

early led into a juſt and rational way of thinking of things, and taught to be extremely cautious of judging according to outward appearances, or the ſuperficial opinion of the multitude. Thus, for example, young ladies ought to be informed, That (contrary to the vulgar error) it is a woman's *conduct* and *behaviour*, not her ſhape and complexion, that determine her character and value. That it is the part of a woman of prudence and diſcretion to beſtow but very little thought on the ornaments of her body, and rather to endeavour after thoſe accompliſhments of the mind, which will hold out, and preſerve the eſteem of her friends and the affection of her huſband after the fading charms of her perſon are gone. That the moſt exquiſite beauty is odious, where the perſon who is poſſeſſed of it ſhews by her affected behaviour, that ſhe is conſcious of her own charms. That when a handſom young woman views herſelf in a glaſs, or hears her beauty commended, prudence ſhould direct her, inſtead of being puffed up with pride and ſelf-admiration, to reflect, that it is her buſineſs to take care that her mind be as well adorned with the Chriſtian graces and virtues as her face is by the exquiſite hand of Nature with a juſt mixture of the lily and the roſe; to conſider the ſuperficial beauty ſhe and others admire is every day drawing nearer to old age, wrinkles, and corruption; but that the beauties of her mind will ſtill be improving to all eternity; to remember, that however amiable and delicate any human form may appear to the eye, there is nothing more mortifying than the conſideration of the groſs ſubſtances our bodies conſiſt of, and the many nauſeous and diſagreeable properties of them; and that if beauty is really in any degree valuable, it ought to fill the perſon poſſeſſed of it with gratitude to Him, who beſtowed it, and inſpire her with the ambition of improving her mind

ſuitably,

ſuitably, and ſo become an object the moſt compleatly amiable that the eye of man can behold, which I believe every one will own is, A woman whoſe perſon is adorned with unaffected beauty, and her mind with Good-nature, Prudence, Virtue, and Religion. That a nice taſte in dreſs is a *bleminſh* inſtead of an *accompliſhment*, becauſe it is a mark of ſuperior ſenſe to *deſpiſe* all trifling matters, and to be anxious only about things of conſequence. That a woman's having beauty enough to ſtrike as many coxcombs dead at a glance as could be contained in both Vauxhall and Ranelagh, could be no real advantage to her: but the having her mind endued with ſuch amiable qualifications as will gain and ſecure the affection and eſteem of *one* man of ſenſe for life, would be of the utmoſt conſequence; and that the deſire of gaining a multitude of admirers, or of making conqueſts, is the very madneſs of folly. That flattering a woman for her beauty, and pretending to gain her favour by that means, is more properly an *affront* than a compliment, becauſe it ſuppoſes her ſo extremely weak, as to be taken with *flattery*, which is the very food of fools, and with the praiſes of what ſhe does not owe to herſelf, but to nature, and with the praiſes too of the very meaneſt accompliſhment a valuable woman is endued with, which is not worth commending in a perſon, who has any one other qualification to be taken notice of for. That the temptations and dangers, beauty expoſes a woman to, are more than all the advantages accruing to her from it, can make up for; and that it requires an uncommon meaſure of prudence and caution in the perſon poſſeſſed of it, to prevent one bad effect or other from it.

Whenever a young lady arrives at the age of Twelve or Fourteen, it is high time to begin to inſtruct her how to conduct herſelf with regard to the

the other sex." I don't mean, To teach her how to set off her affected and artificial charms to the best advantage, and to practise a thousand studied arts and apish tricks to draw a set of superficial fops about her: it is both foolish and base in a woman to put herself off for any thing else than what every woman, and every man is, *viz.* A creature full of infirmity and weakness, and who must in many cases be forgiven and borne with. It is on this account, and by this means, that so many marriages are unfortunate, which had not been so, if the parties had been wise enough or honest enough to behave to one another like rational creatures before they came together.

It is therefore my opinion, that the youth of both sexes should be taught, That every thing in love-matters, except a rational, modest and cool inclination towards the most happy and perfect state known on earth, I mean, of marriage, on account of its various advantages and comforts beyond a single life, is contrary to the design of Heaven in creating the species in two sexes, and inconsistent with the nature and present state of mankind; and that all those loose images, or romantic notions we have in plays, novels, and poems, which serve either to inflame beastly desires, or at best to fill the imagination with raptures and extasies, which are altogether inconsistent with the calm dignity of a decent behaviour in the marriage state, are to the last degree pernicious and mischievous.

It is highly necessary that young women be early instructed both how to behave with regard to the honourable lover and the crafty seducer. With the first plainness and sincerity are all that is necessary, and with the latter distance and severity of behaviour; or, which is still the more sure way to be safe, downright flight: for the truest courage in temptation is shewn by running

ning away. They ſhould be taught, That for a young woman to believe the flattering proteſtations of deſigning men, is to venture her *all* againſt thoſe, who have nothing to loſe. They ought above all things to be every day and every hour cautioned againſt *Flattery*, which is always one principal art that is uſed in the undoing of every young woman, that is undone. They ought to be forwarned, that every man, who perſiſts in a ſlaviſh attendance on a young woman, without making honourable propoſals to her, has certainly either a deſign upon her virtue, or is a fool and incapable of any deſign at all. And they ought to be led to conſider every man, who pretends to love and admire them, and is all the while endeavouring to ſeduce them, in the ſame light as a wolf, who (if he had the gift of ſpeech) ſhould earneſtly beg the favour of a lamb to come within the reach of his claws: for that he greatly admired his beauty and plumpneſs, and wiſhed to have the pleaſure of devouring him.

But there is no end of the uſeful and important leſſons of prudence that might be taught young ladies, nor of the advantages they might gain by them. They ſhould likewiſe, as a powerful preſervative againſt the inordinate love of gaiety and pleaſure, be drawn, if poſſible, to a love of reading, I don't mean plays, romances, or love-poetry, which all tend to give their minds a wrong caſt, and which they ſhould be taught to deſpiſe for the falſe, bombaſtic, and unnatural conceits they are generally ſtuffed with: The reading that is moſt proper for them (abſtracting from books on moral and divine ſubjects) is Hiſtory, and Biography or the Lives of eminent men. Nor ſhould they be ſuffered to be ignorant of Geography. What has been already ſaid on inſtructing the youth of the other ſex in the Chriſtian religion may, with a very little variation be applicable on this head.

If, after what has been recommended to Parents and Inſtructors of youth for eſtabliſhing thoſe under their care in Morality and Chriſtianity, any thing were to be added with a view of rendering the pains they have beſtowed the more effectual, I ſhould think the following might be likely to anſwer very important ends, and properly crown the whole work. That before a youth removes from under the eye of his Parent or Inſtructor, a Paper by way of letter be drawn up for his uſe by ſuch parent or teacher, conſiſting of, 1. An abridgment of the Maxims and leſſons of Prudence and Virtue that have been taught him. 2. A brief view of the Doctrines and Precepts of Chriſtianity. 3. An abſtract of the moſt forcible and convincing Arguments for the truth of Chriſtianity. 4. Some warm and pathetic Exhortations to endeavour after a ſteddy and univerſal conformity to the laws of the Chriſtian religion. 5. Cautions againſt the dangers incident to youth from the prevalence of Deiſm *, from the ſnares of pleaſure,

* The danger to be ſure is not great, leſt thoſe profound philoſophers the modern Deiſts ſhould gain many proſelytes, except among people of their own pitch of underſtanding. But youth, who have not had their belief of Chriſtianity eſtabliſhed in a convincing manner upon a thorough knowledge of its evidences, are liable to be drawn aſide by the moſt wretched ſophiſtry. They ought therefore to be forewarned and prepared for the cavils (poor and feeble as they are) of that unhappy ſet of men, who reaſon as a perſon might be expected to do, who was born with the wrong ſide of his brain upwards; and may be ſafely told, That the following are two or three of their moſt formidable arguments againſt the Chriſtian religion. "That it can never ſignify much, whether "mankind believe or reject the Chriſtian faith, if their practice "be right." Which is much about as good ſenſe as to ſay, It is no great matter, whether the moſt effectual method that can be imagined, for compaſſing a deſign, be taken, ſo the deſign be compaſſed, or That it does not much ſignify, in raiſing a ſtructure, whether a good foundation be laid or not, ſo the ſtructure be raiſed. Again, "That the light of Reaſon is "ſufficient for mankind, and that Revelation is of no manner

ſure, honour, or riches, and from the infection of bad company. 6. Directions, in caſe of a fatal deſection from virtue and religion, how to recover and return again to the way of truth; and cautions againſt the too common and deſtructive practice of putting off repentance till old age and a death-bed; and what other particulars may ſeem to the diſcretion of every Parent or Inſtructor of youth likely to be beneficial. This Letter, if I might adviſe, ſhould be written with the hand of the parent, or perſon, who has had the care of the youth, and a promiſe deſired of him, as a laſt and parting favour, That he would conſtantly, while he lived, continue to give it a fair reading a certain number of times every year; once a quarter, or the like. I am perſuaded, that any thing written and given to a youth by a perſon, whom he formerly knew intimately, and was uſed to think of with eſteem and love, muſt to the laſt day of his life have a more powerful effect in keeping him ſteddy to his duty, or in calling him back to it, in caſe of a defection from it, than a much more elaborate compoſition of a perſon, who was a ſtranger to him, or who had

" of uſe, and therefore ought to be rejected." Which, ſetting aſide its being found by experience, That the light of Reaſon and Revelation both are not too much, is to the ſame purpoſe as to ſay, The naked eye is ſufficient to ſhew us, that there are planets in the ſky, and therefore Teleſcopes are of no manner of uſe in aſtronomy, though they may ſhew us many ſurprizing phenomena in each of them, that never were thought of before the invention of that noble inſtrument. " That " Morality is all, and therefore the rejection of a particular " revelation can never be diſpleaſing in the ſight of God." As if it was not as much an Immorality and as criminal in the ſight of God to oppoſe, or even to neglect what comes with all the characters, internal and external, of a revelation from Him, as to injure one's neighbour. " That Chriſtianity cannot be a " revelation from God, elſe it had been communicated with " equal advantage to all mankind." Which is as good left-handed arguing, as to ſay, That Reaſon cannot be the gift of God, elſe it had been communicated with equal advantages to every Idiot as to Sir Iſaac Newton.

written

written ſuch a piece not immediately for his particular uſe. And, as to thoſe parents, who may not have the proper leiſure or abilities they can but apply for aſſiſtance to any judicious perſon either of the clergy or laity, of which it is to be hoped there are every where numbers, who would gladly be employed in ſuch work.

Thus have I (my dear Countrymen) in the ſincerity and honeſty of a heart that deſires no greater happineſs than an opportunity of doing you ſervice, laid before you a few incorrect and unpoliſhed, but, I hope, not improper or unneceſſary obſervations on a ſubject, which truly ſeems to me worthy, in this preſent age, of a much more ſufficient hand. If what is here publiſhed ſhould give the hint to ſuch an one, to do complete juſtice to the ſubject, it will give me a peculiar pleaſure. And if any perſon diſpoſed to ſet the public right in any particular point I may have miſled them in, will do it in the ſame ſpirit of candour as the above was written in, he is ſure before-hand at leaſt of *my* thanks.

Methinks to Parents there ſhould be no great occaſion for any pathetic intreaties, to move them to diligence in endeavouring to promote the happineſs of their own offspring both here and hereafter; if the ties of natural affection do not engage them to their own fleſh and blood, it is not any thing I can ſay, that will be of any influence with them. Nor indeed will any arguments be of weight with thoſe Inſtructors of youth, whom the terrors of a day of account will not move to endeavour to acquit themſelves faithfully. Some Parents there are, who, either from want of leiſure, of a faculty of expreſſing themſelves, and communicating what they know, or of a proper education, are not in a capacity to be very uſeful to their children in the ways I have been recommending: but (as is already

ſaid) we have reaſon to bleſs the Divine providence that there are not many places in Britain where any parent, who is deſirous to have his children inſtructed in principles of Virtue and Religion, can be wholly at a loſs for proper aſſiſtance. And, as it is not to be ſuppoſed, any perſon ſhould take upon him the charge of inſtructing youth, who is not himſelf in ſome meaſure a judge both of moſt of the branches of human literature they ought to be inſtructed in, and likewiſe more eſpecially of moral and divine matters, or, if there are, little do they think what a charge they undertake; if, I ſay, any ſuch perſon neglects the inſtruction of thoſe, who are under his care, in principles of Morality and Chriſtianity, or commits it to any other who, for ought he knows, may neglect it too, he will, I am afraid, be found one day without excuſe.

And now, having ſaid what I thought would be proper on this occaſion, to give me an opportunity of doing my beſt for your ſervice and advantage; what remains, I mean the ſucceſs of this weak attempt, muſt be left to the grace of God, and to your willingneſs to liſten to well-meant advice.

FINIS.